

# BIBLE READINGS SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JULY

## **2 Samuel 6:1-5**

David brought together 30,000 of Israel's best soldiers and <sup>2</sup> led them to Baalah in Judah, which was also called Kiriath-Jearim. They were going there to get the sacred chest and bring it back to Jerusalem. The throne of the LORD All-Powerful is above the winged creatures on top of this chest, and he is worshiped there.

<sup>3</sup> They put the sacred chest on a new ox cart and started bringing it down the hill from Abinadab's house. Abinadab's sons Uzzah and Ahio were guiding the ox cart, <sup>4</sup> with Ahio walking in front of it. <sup>5</sup> Some of the people of Israel were playing music on small harps and other stringed instruments, and on tambourines, castanets, and cymbals. David and the others were happy, and they danced for the LORD with all their might.

This is the Word of the Lord.

## **Ephesians 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup> Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the spiritual blessings that Christ has brought us from heaven! <sup>4</sup> Before the world was created, God had Christ choose us to live with him and to be his holy and innocent and loving people. <sup>5</sup> God was kind and decided that Christ would choose us to be God's own adopted children. <sup>6</sup> God treated us with undeserved grace because of the Son he dearly loves, and so we should praise God.

<sup>7-8</sup> Christ sacrificed his life's blood to set us free, which means our sins are now forgiven. Christ did this because of God's gift of undeserved grace to us. God has great wisdom and understanding, <sup>9</sup> and by what Christ has done, God has shown us his own mysterious ways. <sup>10</sup> Then when the time is right, God will do all he has planned, and Christ will bring together everything in heaven and on earth.

<sup>11</sup> God always does what he plans, and this is why he appointed Christ to choose us. <sup>12</sup> He did this so we Jews would bring honour to him and be the first ones to have hope because of him. <sup>13</sup> Christ also brought you the truth, which is the good news about how you can be saved. You put your faith in Christ and were given the promised Holy Spirit to show you belong to God. <sup>14</sup> The Spirit also makes us sure we will be given what God has stored up for his people. Then we will be set free, and God will be honoured and praised.

This is the Word of the Lord.

## **Mark 6:14-29**

<sup>14</sup> Jesus became so well-known that Herod the ruler heard about him. Some people thought he was John the Baptist, who had come back to life with the power to work miracles. <sup>15</sup> Others thought he was Elijah or some other prophet who had lived long ago. <sup>16</sup> But when Herod heard about Jesus, he said, "This must be John! I had his head cut off, and now he has come back to life."

<sup>17-18</sup> Herod had earlier married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. But John had told him, "It isn't right for you to take your brother's wife!" So, in order to please Herodias, Herod arrested John and put him in prison.

<sup>19</sup> Herodias had a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she could not do it <sup>20</sup> because Herod was afraid of John and protected him. He knew that John was a good and holy man. Even though Herod was confused by what John said, he was glad to listen to him. And he often did.

<sup>21</sup> Finally, Herodias got her chance when Herod gave a great birthday celebration for himself and invited his officials, his army officers, and the leaders of Galilee. <sup>22</sup> The daughter of Herodias came in and danced for Herod and his guests. She pleased them so much that Herod said, "Ask for anything, and it's yours!" <sup>23</sup> I swear that I will give you as much as half of my kingdom, if you want it."

<sup>24</sup> The girl left and asked her mother, "What do you think I should ask for?" Her mother answered, "The head of John the Baptist!"

<sup>25</sup> The girl hurried back and told Herod, "Here and now on a serving plate I want the head of John the Baptist!"

<sup>26</sup> Herod was very sorry for what he had said. But he did not want to break the promise he had made in front of his guests. <sup>27</sup> At once he ordered a guard to cut off John's head there in prison. <sup>28</sup> The guard put the head on a serving plate and took it to the girl. Then she gave it to her mother.

<sup>29</sup> When John's followers learned that he had been killed, they took his body and put it in a tomb.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.